In the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 2, with the following rewritten paragraph:

The present invention relates generally to cookware, and more particularly to items of cookware having an electroless nickel outer layer, and to a method of ~~coating~~ plating such cookware.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 3, line 2, with the following rewritten paragraph:

The invention provides an electroless-nickel-plated surface on metal cookware, particularly on skillets and pots and pans. A substrate consisting of a skillet, griddle, pot, pan, grill or cooking grate (which terms are used interchangeably herein) to be coated is treated by cleaning and deoxidizing the surface of the substrate, rinsing the substrate, and applying an electroless nickel plating or coating to the surface of the metal substrate.

Please replace the paragraphs beginning on page 3, line 8, to the end of page 3, with the following rewritten paragraphs:

The principal object of the present invention is to provide a ~~coated~~ plated skillet, pot, pan, grill, griddle, or other metal cookware.

Another object of the invention is to provide a metal cookware item having a ~~coating~~ plating that inhibits oxidation of the surface thereof.

A further object of this invention is to provide a method for producing an electroless nickel ~~coated~~ plated skillet, pot, pan, or other cookware.

Another object of the invention is to provide a ~~coated~~ plated item of cookware, which is resistant to food sticking to the surface thereof, and which retains its lubricity for its entire lifetime of use.

Beginning on page 5, after line 6, please insert the following paragraph:

- - The substrate is preferably cast iron, but can be iron, steel, aluminum, copper, brass, or alloys thereof. - - .

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

The cookware is inserted into the plating bath for a period of time sufficient to attain a ~~coating~~ plating thickness of from not less than 0.0003 inch to no more than 0.0025 inch, during which air sparging of the bath is conducted to cause circulation of the bath and complete coverage of the substrate by the nickel containing coating. For a ~~coating~~ plating thickness in the optimum range, the substrate should remain in contact with the ~~coating~~ plating material for about 1 ½ to 2 hours.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 17, with the following rewritten paragraph:

The nickel ~~coating~~ , or plating, will pass an ASTM (American Society of Testing Materials) nitric acid test and an ASTM B117 salt spray test, and will achieve a minimum hardness of 58 on the Rockwell C scale. The nickel coating will meet military specification standard Mil-C-26074E.